

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, August 28 2006
The Center of Clayton – OASIS Meeting Room A

The following members were present:

Alex Berger	Dick Hyde
Brad Bernstein	Jill Indovino
Mimi Deem	Omri Praiss
Deb Dubin	Rich Yawitz

Excused/Absent

Andy Goldberg
Judy Goodman

Also Present:

Patty DeForrest, Director of Parks and Recreation
Andrew Frankie, Planning Design Studio
Dan Bockert, Planning Design Studio

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the July 24, 2006 meeting were approved as read.

Director's Report

Students returned to school last week. We made the decision to extend the hours at the Shaw Park pool again this year. Tuesday through Friday we will have lap swimming from 4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. What is new this year is that we will have the pool open during the weekend of the Art Fair open from 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Our Fall session of classes has begun. This time of year we have great enrollment in our fitness, youth sports and learn to swim programs. We have over one hundred and fifteen children enrolled in our Volleyball leagues. Last year was the first we returned to Youth Volleyball and we had seventy five participants. Our Youth Soccer leagues are full.

The Saint Louis Art Fair is September 8, 9 and 10. Our department's responsibility is minimal. The Parks staff assists with trash pick up and with set-up. The recreation department staff mans a soda and beer booth. There is one more Musical Nights in Oak Knoll Park. It is Sunday, September 24 and there will be a blue grass band playing at the event. Our last Parties in the Park is on September 13. October is a huge event month for Parks and Recreation. There are many small events: Wydown Fall Festival, Clayton Canine Classics, Party in the Patch, Jaguar Event, and the Big Read which is sponsored by Cultural Festivals and Rock the Block, which is a new Chamber of Commerce event.

The Ball Field project is out to bid and bids are due on Friday, September 1. Hopefully they will come in within budget and they will be discussed at the Board of Alderman meeting on September 12. The field project is scheduled to take about six weeks. The Tennis Center project is also out for bid.

Two positions are open within the department. One is the Assistant Fitness Supervisor position and the other is a Parks Laborer position. We are hoping to fill these within the next two weeks.

Hanley House Council Update

The last Hanley House Council meeting was held on Monday, August 18. At this meeting the Council discussed several things about the Hanley House consultant. The consultant did a phase one proposal to set goals and put together a phase two proposal. The cost of phase one was fifty two hundred dollars. The Commission requested a copy of the Phase one report. The proposal for Phase II was quite extensive and staff along with the Hanley House Council felt that it was too aggressive. It had a price tag of sixty five thousand dollars and it was a plan to look into building an ancillary building and developing all kinds of programming and events that we felt was a little premature. Therefore, the decision was made to work with the intern to continuing exploring options for the house and compiling information prior to making a decision to move forward on a plan.

The Hanley House intern's name is Mr. Josh Newby-Harpole. He is a historian who has worked on the Campbell House project. Mr. Newby-Harpole has a wealth of knowledge and a lot of access to free expert opinions and expert advice. He has found a group called the Missouri Humanities Council that will

do a charet and bring in experts who will actually look at it and write their recommendations. He has been working with Esley Hamilton and other experts in the field. Mr. Newby-Harpole is looking at all options for the house to moving it, to maintaining it the way it is, to turning into a bed and breakfast and all kinds of options. St. Louis County has also been lending their expertise. He will also be spending some of his time compiling and getting good information on what projected cost of repairs would be, what other places have done. He will compile all of that information before we decide to move forward. Ms. DeForrest will share the reports he creates with the Commission. This information will help keep the Commission informed about everything that is taking place at the Hanley House. We may perhaps go back to the consultants at that point for further work. We are not telling them no at this point, but we are going to put them on hold to see what we can accomplish while we get results from the Master Plan. The message that is being heard at the Board of Alderman level and at staff level is that the house needs to be financially viable.

Community Input / Commission Discussion

Ms. DeForrest stated we want to find out what the community prioritizes through surveys and public forums and from the Master plan. We are currently looking into ways to make the Hanley House more viable, see if it can be part of the school curriculum, groups to use it for luncheons and see if we should have build an ancillary building. We will meet with the people who live near the Hanley House to find out what they want. Ms. DeForrest discussed the details of the consultant process with the Commission. Ms. DeForrest stated that this felt like it was a large undertaking to enter into without having all of the information we needed. The process was that the consultants submitted a proposal to staff and then Ms. DeForrest met with the City Manager, the Deputy City Manager and one of the aldermen about that proposal. They discussed it and then made recommendations to the Hanley House Council. The BOA is the ultimate decision maker in any kind of policy or expenditure of money. Mr. Yawitz stated that he would like to have further discussion to see if there is a consensus about the Hanley House among the community. Mr. Praiss suggested we find out what all of our possible options are in reference to the Hanley House project. Ms. DeForrest suggested that the Commission has a meeting with the Hanley House Council. This may be the piece that we are missing. We can get everyone involved in this project. The entire budget for the Hanley House comes from the Recreation and Storm water tax. It is not a self-sustaining fund. This sales tax initiative was passed in the mid-nineties. Mr. Yawitz would not like the Hanley House project to move forward unless it is clearly shown that the project has some economic viability as it is balanced against the social and educational benefits. In balancing the costs and benefits, consideration with respect to moving forward with the Hanley House project should also factor and take into account any lost opportunity cost pertaining to other potential opportunities which would be foregone if significant expenditures were made to further this project. Mr. Berger stated that he respected what Mr. Yawitz stated about return on investments. However, there are many events in Clayton that have zero return on investment. The ice skating rink is one example and we are looking at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars minimally in capital improvements, so we can run it for less than ninety days which averages ten people a day. The value earmarked around the Hanley House, the people who are tied to the historic aspect is much stronger than Mr. Berger can represent, but it is just as viable of a concern. Mr. Berger also stated that the BOA is under tremendous pressure around the cost of activities. The Hanley House has been a priority that we have put some money into in the last three years for maintenance. More discussion will need to take place on this topic in the future.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

See the power point presentation attached that reflects the presentation given by the consultants. Mr. Franke thoroughly explained to the Commission exactly where they are with the Master Plan process by providing a summary of the events that have taken place. Mr. Franke also reviewed the information and the plan they will utilize during the Public Forum. This Master Plan was created because the last time the Parks and Recreation department did a Master Plan was in 1992. It was primarily facility based and it directed the building of a new community center, the renovation to the outdoor pool and the work on the ice rink. Everything that was referred to in it has already been completed. Creating a Master Plan will help us determine where we need to go next. It also helps us in applying for grants. A lot of times it is required that projects you want to do are part of a master plan, and it is important to find out from the

community want they want. They have also received a lot of input from the stakeholders and through the recreation programming workshop. (The idea of the merger was not included in the preparation of this Master Plan.) This Master Plan is clearly only for the City of Clayton. Ms. DeForrest stated that this process is very exciting and some of the preliminary information has already been useful to her.

The Master Plan will give us a broader look at how to accomplish our goals over the next ten to fifteen years. The design group is just about finished with the majority of data collection. The next big event is to have the public forum workshop. During the public forum Mr. Franke will present this power point and will speak about the parks to give the public an idea of all of the parks in Clayton and to orient them because many people in the community may not be aware of the location of all of the parks. What will be extremely helpful during the public forum will be other comments that are presented from the community, especially because they will likely bring up topics that we have not included in this project. These types of comments will bring out opportunities for further discussion. All groups will have the same questions and after they discuss the various topics, then the team leader will present everything that was discussed during their group discussion. After the presentations the posters will be posted and everyone who attends the forum will be able to place dots next to the information or topics they feel are the most important or need to be discussed further. It will show what people feel are their priorities. Different groups have done different pieces of the plan. Pros Consulting is doing the program evaluation, which will give us one prospective and Mr. Franke and Mr. Bockert provided a different perspective. It is a very broad Master Plan. It will be interesting to see what direction the community will like us to go.

There was a great response to the survey, which was distributed only to Clayton residents. It also shows that there is a large interest in parks and recreation. The survey did include some questions about the Center of Clayton. The consultants will only react to the information they obtain from the survey. We had over three hundred people respond to our survey and we mailed them to fifteen hundred households. At the October meeting the design group will present the results from the first public forum, they will discuss the results of the survey and they will talk about some emerging concepts. .

The greenways were also discussed in Mr. Franke's presentation. The greenways primary objective is to be major bikeway / pathway that people can get on and take all the way to Creve Coeur Park. It will be its own dedicated space. The spoke of the centennial greenway is actually along the old railroad track easement and it will truly be a greenway because it has a pretty large area that it can come through. It will come right along the west side of Shaw Park, and hook in at the south end. (Public rightaways managed by the Public Works department are not included in this Master Plan.)

Old Business/New Business

The Commission made the decision to cancel the September 25 meeting and attend the public forum on Thursday, September 14. This was decided upon because there were not any large agenda items to discuss at the end of September. Ms. Dubin stated that she would like to discuss Shaw Park Pool concessions at the October meeting.

Respectfully Submitted By,
Denise Ucinski